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PAPISTS

AND

PHARISEES



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PAPISTS and PHARISEES
COMPARED;

OR,

P A P I S T S

THE CORRUPTERS OF

CHRISTIANITY.

IN A DISCOURSE

ON MATTHEW XV, &c.

BY JOHN BURTON, D.D.

VICE-PROVOST of ETON.

L O N D O N,

Printed for J. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*;
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PAPISTS and PHARISEES

COMPARED:

OR

PAPISTS

THE HISTORY OF

CHRISTIANITY

IN A DISCOURSE

ON M. W. & C.



BY JOHN BURTON, D.D.

Vice-Provost of ETON

LONDON:
Printed by J. Rivington, at the Great Court, and
James F. & Co., in Great Street, and by
J. and T. Lott, at the Museum.

P R E F A C E.

A Boasted performance hath lately appeared in the world, entitled, *The life of Cardinal Pole* : but under that cover carrying on a design more important and dangerous, viz. to promote the cause of Popery, and to justify principles and practices inconsistent with the constitution of this kingdom, both civil and ecclesiastical.

The title page proclaims its publication at Oxford ; and from this circumstance many an unwary reader hath been led to imagine that it came out *jussu* or *permissu superiorum* : and, in fact, many an ungracious reflexion hath been thrown out on the university upon that account. It will therefore not be thought improper to undeceive the publick, by this short and plain representation of the case. The work prepared for the press was in form brought to the vice-chancellor, and submitted to his inspection ; by his order it was perused and examined : it was censured and rejected, as a
A production

production unfit to receive the sanction of our university press.

A modest author would probably have been inclined to withdraw himself from the place where he had given offence, and to dissemble the disgrace or merit of such a repulse: but Mr. Philips seems resolved that Oxford should not be deprived of the intended honour; he accordingly gains an easy access to another press in the city, where no *imprimatur* or approbation was required: in this manner his work came out into the world.

It is not my business or inclination, to enter into a dispute with this gentleman: this is already undertaken and executed by abler hands. But I cannot help considering every attempt of this kind, as an admonition to the clergy of the established church to stand upon their guard in opposition to those, who lie in wait to deceive. When any celebrated author comes forth with a plausible volubility of language, and declamatory eloquence—with sly insinuations, and bold assertions—with specious colouring, and artful misrepresentations, calculated merely to amuse and delude superficial observers, to divert their attention from the more important points in debate, when so much art and industry is used to recommend principles of Popery; it certainly behoves us to take the alarm, to exert our best endeavours in defence of our establishment, to repel the open attack, and detect the secret fraud—
to

P R E F A C E. vii

to take off the disguise of false appearances, and confute the fallacious reasonings.

It may here perhaps be said, that this hath already been done to good purpose by our divines, and especially in that critical period of time before the revolution. All this is indeed true; and to those excellent writers I refer all those who want more exact and full information in any particular points; but surely it is not necessary that every serious reader should at once be carried out into this wide field of controversy: it is rather expedient that he should be furnished with a stock of some previous notices; such as would be of general use for his direction, or some sort of manual, which sets forth the principal points in dispute fairly represented, and rightly stated, in a compendious and distinct manner: so that he may be enabled to form a just judgment concerning the merits of the cause, to perceive the difference between Catholick gospel-doctrines, and the peculiar tenets of the church of Rome—between novelty and antiquity—between authority merely human and divine, and, in a word, between Popery and Christianity.

This is what I chiefly have in view: and in prosecution of this design, I have entered upon a regular series of discourses, in which I distinctly examine the twelve additional articles of pope *Pius's* creed, shewing their inconsistency with gospel verities, and the tenor of

Christianity. I conceive this is laying the axe to the root of the tree : for however many other branches of matters controverted between Romanists and Protestants may admit of some palliation ; yet surely, these must on all hands be allowed to be characteristical, the test of authentic and genuine Popery, not to be dissembled or disavowed, being a summary of doctrines established by the council of Trent, and incorporated into their creed, and made an essential part of the Catholick confession of faith.

I am sensible that to state the true notion of their doctrines in such a manner as the Romanists themselves will allow, is a matter of no small nicety and difficulty ; especially since many are delivered in terms indefinite and designedly ambiguous, in the language of the schools, rather than of the gospel, and accordingly give room for the exercise of sophistry and evasive subtilties. I have endeavoured all along to represent them fairly as explained and defended by themselves, and not by drawing consequences to impute to them principles, which they appear to disavow. Therefore in the course of my argument I do not build upon the opinion of any particular doctors, however eminent and respectable, but upon grounds which they esteem more sure and infallible, the decrees of their council. And in order to ascertain the true meaning and intents of these decrees, I have collected the sense of those fathers

thers by whom they were compiled, as recorded in the history of those times, and fully expressed in the course of the previous debates, and confirmed by subsequent practice, and common acceptation by the tenor of their liturgies, catechism *ad Parochos*, and such like authentic documents. Upon the whole I conceive, that nothing more is wanted toward the full confutation of this corrupt system, than a true state of it clearly represented. This is what I attempt to do: and if the common apprehension of the daily encrease of Popery be well founded, the attempt will be thought not less seasonable than important; and be serviceable to the cause of genuine Christianity, by pointing out the corruptions brought in by the church of Rome, and furnish our people with arms offensive and defensive, against a common enemy.

My thoughts on this subject I purpose in due time to communicate to the publick: in the mean while; till this attack be made in form against the head-quarters of the Romanists, I send out this small performance by way of prelude, or slight skirmish, *velitatio pro castris*, in order to explore their situation, disposition, and force, and perhaps provoke some petty hostilities.

'Tis observable, that our biographer in the course of history, acts out of character, and becomes rather a controversial writer; and takes much

X P R E F A C E.

much pains to dress out his scheme of Popery in the fairest colours, with all the wanton fancy of a painter : we see it recommended by the incommunicable high character of catholicism, primitive antiquity, apostolical tradition, and every circumstance which may give it an air of dignity and veneration. On the other hand I shall take the liberty by way of contrast, to consider this admired system in a very different point of view, and set forth a different representation of Popery, and shew the Romanists to themselves in a true light, shew that their boasted antiquity is really no other than a pious fraud, and an innovation on the original Christian plan—that their apostolical traditions are no other than the inventions of fallible, fallacious men, which have made God's commandments of none effect. In a word, I consider Popery, as such, in no other view, than as the corruptions of Christianity digested into an artificial system : corruptions similar in kind and degree to those which our Saviour condemned in the Scribes and Pharisees. Accordingly I have drawn out a parallel, and considered the character of these Scribes and Pharisees, Christian and Jewish, in a comparative view : I have pointed out their agreement in principle and practice, their agreement in the sinister motives of proceedings, and wicked manner of conducting them, and withal, the like mischievous effects from thence redounding to the common cause of true religion and

and virtue: and in consequence, by parity of reason, I consider them both as involved in one common censure.

I need not be told, that analogy is not demonstration or direct proof of any controverted point: I do not offer it as such, but by way of illustration, or *argumentum ad hominem*, such as indirectly, and by reflexion from some known object transfers the reason to similar circumstances, and by this application often produces that conviction which the most rigorous argumentation cannot enforce. We see this indirect manner of address in many instances applied with good success: an useful moral lesson is conveyed through the narrative of the distant fable: *Mutato nomine de te Fabula narratur*; and by making the proper application, men become their own instructors.

A comparative view of persons and things serves to enlarge their notions, and remove prejudices, affording entertainment for the imagination as well as exercise for the judgment; they are often surprized into the acknowledgment of many truths, which hitherto had escaped their notice; in the case of others, they feel something which affects their own, and are at once struck with the similitude of features reflected by the upbraiding mirror.

I have therefore in this address to the Romanists thought it proper, rather to enter into the history of facts which speak for themselves, than into doubtful disputations about
abstruse,

abstruse, controverted points of doctrines, which sophistry and scholastic subtilty may perplex and elude. Opposite characters are here drawn out and compared; the reader will judge of the propriety of the comparison. 'Tis well known that objects viewed in a different light have a different appearance: and I wish that the representation here made, may have a good effect on the minds of the Romanists: that they would lay aside their prejudices, and consider their religious state in this comparative view, and improve their observation to a good moral purpose, by avoiding those faults which they, judging impartially, would readily condemn in others: in a word, I wish they would seriously consider how far they are affected by the charge here brought against the Scribes and Pharisees, so that feeling the conviction of the like guilt, they would disclaim those principles and practices which they perceive so severely censured by our Saviour. I shall conclude with the application of St. Paul's prayer for the unbelieving Jews: *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer unto God for Israel is, that they might be saved; for I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*

THEN CAME TO JESUS SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, WHICH WERE OF JERUSALEM, SAYING, WHY DO THY DISCIPLES TRANSGRESS THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS? FOR THEY WASH NOT THEIR HANDS, WHEN THEY EAT BREAD. BUT HE ANSWERED, AND SAID UNTO THEM: WHY DO YE ALSO TRANSGRESS THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD BY YOUR TRADITION? FOR GOD COMMANDED, SAYING, "HONOUR THY FATHER " AND THY MOTHER, AND HE THAT CURS- " ETH FATHER OR MOTHER, LET HIM DIE " THE DEATH:" BUT YE SAY, WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY TO HIS FATHER OR HIS MOTHER, IT IS A GIFT BY WHATSOEVER THOU MIGHTEST BE PROFITED BY ME, AND HONOUR NOT HIS FATHER OR HIS MOTHER, HE SHALL BE FREE. THUS HAVE YE MADE THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD OF NONE EFFECT BY YOUR TRADITION.

THIS portion of scripture contains copious matter, both historical and doctrinal ; relating to a sect of persons, who made the most considerable figure in the Jewish church ;

but were condemned by Christ, as the great corrupters of God's true religion; as the authors of gross errors in doctrine and depravity in manners: *they transgressed the commandment of God by their traditions.*

Direct your views to a sect of a similar character, the Scribes and Pharisees of the church of *Rome*: the authors of many gross corruptions of christianity. *They also transgress the commandment of God by their Traditions.* To them we may directly apply this expostulation and censure of our blessed Saviour; I shall endeavour to justify the application, and to shew the *parity* of reason, which involves them in the like condemnation.

I shall consider the character of the *Pharisees*, both *Jewish* and *Christian*, in a comparative view. I shall point out their agreement in principles and practices, alike falsehood in doctrine, and superstition in worship: errors multiplied on errors, and all springing from one common cause, an authority merely *human*; yet obtruded on the people, as *divine*; and thus marked by our Saviour's censure: *they taught for doctrines the commandments of men*; and, in consequence of this, *they made the commandments of God of none effect thro' their traditions.* This is indeed a very heavy charge; but that it is a just one and well founded, will appear from the course of the history, which I shall now give of their proceedings.

THEN

THEN CAME TO JESUS SCRIBES AND PHARISEES [a].

These men had often entered into dispute with him, and were as often baffled and confuted. Now, as they on all occasions watched his actions with an insidious view, they thought that they had greatly the advantage of him in the present case. They accordingly attack him with this accusation of his disciples: *Why do they transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.* Here was a notorious overtact, an avowed breach of an established rule: in the observance of which (among many others of like kind) the *Pharisees* placed no small part of their piety; and so, of course, every act of disobedience in *this* respect, would subject the offending party to the imputation of irreverence, or prophaneness.

[a] πῶς οὖν, τότε κατανεότητος.—after the miracle of the loaves—after his walking upon the sea—after the people on the other side of the water flocked to him, and were cured of their diseases; *τηνκα δὲ προσελθόντων αὐτῷ οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Γραμματεῖς οὐ κατεπλάγυντες τῆς ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ δυνάμει κατεμνησθῆναι τοὺς καὶ μόνοι ἀψαμένους τῇ κρᾶσπιδι τῇ ἱματίῳ αὐτοῦ, φιλαίως δὲ ἐγκαλεῖς ἐπὶ τῷ διδασκαλῷ [τῶς μαθηταί] οὐ παραβάσεως ἐντολῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ παραβάσεως μίας Ἰουδαίων πρεσβυτέρων—φαινοῖται φιλογαλήμονες οἱ περὶ μὲν ἐντολῆς Θεοῦ μηδὲν ἐχούσης ἐγκαλεῖν τοὺς Ἰησοῦ μαθηταί, μόνοι δὲ πρεσβυτέρων παραβάσεως μίας· καὶ μαλιστα ἐμφανίται τὸ φιλογαλήμονος ὅτι παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἱαθεῖσι ἀπὸ τοῦ κακῶς ἔχειν προσαγοῦσι τὸ ἐγκλημα τὸ μὲν δοκεῖν κατὰ τῶν μαθητῶν, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς τὸ διδασκαλῷ διαβάλλειν προαιρήμενοι.* Origen. ad locum.

How then doth our Saviour answer them? He dismisseth the frivolous charge without any notice: but retorts on them an accusation of a more important kind: viz. *why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your traditions?*—*Ye hypocrites, that strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel!*—Ye blind guides, who rigorously insist upon obedience to institutions, in their nature indifferent, as to their uses trifling and insignificant, and as to their authority, merely human—and at the same time, without scruple, presume to disobey the express commands of God in the more weighty matters of moral duty.—Such was our Saviour's manner of answering the objections of the *Pharisees*.

We also may justly make the application to our own case in like circumstances. If a *Romanist* should demand of us, why do you Protestants reject image-worship—the invocation of saints—why do you transgress the traditions of our *church* in these and other-like respects? We may with parity of reason retort on them our Saviour's expostulation: Why do you *Romanists* transgress the commandments of God by your traditions? *for God commanded saying, Thou shalt not make any graven image—and thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* In as much as ye disregard the laws of God, vain are all your pretences to piety; the scheme of your religion is downright hypocrisy, and your most
zealous

zealous services *superstition*: in vain do ye worship God, while ye make his commandments of none effect thro' your traditions.

The observation, which I would here point out, is *this*: viz. that Christ's argument against the traditions of the *Pharisees* equally affects those of the church of *Rome*: inasmuch as these stand upon the same precarious and treacherous foundation,—contrived with a view to the same unworthy ends,—and attended with the same mischievous effects on religion.

But to return to the history of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.—As these men are scarce ever mentioned by our Saviour, but with some severe *censure* and emphatical denunciation of woe, we have reason to presume that *their* behaviour was more highly criminal than that of the *other* Jews. Let us then proceed to enquire into the *grounds* of this censure, and examine their peculiar principles and practices.

With regard to the *Scribes*—I am sensible that they were an order of men, distinct from the *Pharisees*; and that this denomination implies only a certain profession or scheme of employment, indeterminate as to this or that *religious* sect. They are in scripture called, οἱ Γραμματεῖς—Νομικοί—Νομοδιδασκαλοί; and indeed this order of men subsisted in the Jewish church, long before the name of *Pharisee* was ever heard of. As to the general notion of their office, they seem to have been a sort of publick notaries, amanuenses, transcribers of the

law, readers of the law, and expounders in the synagogues. After the captivity, we find *Ezra* distinguish'd by this title ὁ Γραμματεὺς, and engaged in these religious services. Now, as these men were conversant in transcribing and reading the law, 'tis probable that they set up themselves for νομοδιδασκαλοι, and instructors of the people. It is moreover probable, they were for the most part *Levites*, whose peculiar business it was to study and read the law. As I have before remark'd, they were not by their profession determin'd to any particular religious sect: not every *Scribe* was a *Pbarisee*, no more than every *Pbarisee* was a *Scribe*: *St. Paul* was a *Pbarisee*, and not a *Scribe*. But however, since we generally find them mentioned jointly, and involved in the same common censure, we may upon the fairest grounds of probability consider them as belonging to the sect of the *Pbarisees*, which they may be presumed to prefer as being the most popular and respectable in the Jewish church.

The *Pbarisees* [b], as the original word imports, were a sect of *Separatists*, and in practice a kind of *Puritans*; they affected a distinction of character from the common people, and separated themselves in a singular manner

[b] Φαρισαῖοι συνταγμα τι Ἰουδαίων δοκῶν ακριβεστέρον εἶναι τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τὰς νόμους ακριβεστέρον ἐξηγεῖσθαι. Joseph. b. i. c. 5.

Φαρισαῖοι μὲν οἱ δοκῶντες μὲν ακριβείας ἐξηγεῖσθαι τὰ νόμιμα. b. i.

Καὶ γὰρ ἡν μοῖριον τι Ἰουδαίων ἀνθρώπων ἐπ' ακριβέσσει μετὰ φόβου τοῦ πατρὸς νόμου—Φαρισαῖοι καλεῖσθαι. B. xvii. c. 12.

to the study of the law : which they pretended to understand more perfectly, and to interpret with more than ordinary skill, and to observe with a more rigorous punctuality. They also affected a separation from others, by the appearance of extraordinary *sanctity* in their manners ; insomuch that they looked upon all others in comparison of themselves with some degree of contempt, or detestation. Such was the behaviour of the *Pharisee* in the temple praying, which our Saviour has represented, Luke xviii. 11. *Lord I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican.* From hence we perceive, that the vain opinion of their piety, made them proud and arrogant, even in their addresses to God : and, with regard to their neighbours, most uncharitable and censorious : *they trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* Such was their character in a general view.

And now is not this the very case of the *Romanists* ? do not *they* also claim a distinction of eminence and superiority, and separate themselves from the communion of other christians, whom in comparison of themselves they despise, and treat with scorn and aversion, as *Publicans* and *Sinners* ? do they not arrogate to themselves an exclusive right, as well as superior abilities, to interpret the holy scriptures, and prescribe the rule of faith and manners ? do they not pretend to a more perfect know-

ledge of christianity, and constitute themselves the only true expositors and dispensers of gospel doctrines?—do not they withal affect the character of a more refined pharisaical sanctity in manners, as well as an infallible orthodoxy in opinion? do they not trust in themselves *that* they above all others are eminently righteous? do they not pride themselves in the variety of pious institutions, in so many different orders of holy men, devoted to the glory of God and advancement of religion? In a word, do they not appropriate to their own particular church the distinguishing character of *holy* and *catholic*, not only by way of *eminence*, but also *exclusively* of all other christian sects? And in what view do they look upon *Protestants*, but in such as the *Pharisee* did on the *Publican*? They mark them for *Hereticks* and reprobate sinners; and under that notion excluded from the possibility of salvation; the benefit of which they confine to themselves within the pale of their own communion. But, after all, how unwarrantable and injurious is such a proceeding? how inconsistent with the common principles of christianity, with the spirit of gospel humility and charity?

In the next place, the circumstances of the *rise* and *progress* of this powerful sect, deserve our notice. The precise *time* indeed, which gave it birth, is no where mentioned in sacred history; we find there only the matter of fact in general asserted, viz. that it had taken deep
root,

root, and its influence had become too prevalent among the people. The first mention of its origin occurs in *Josephus, Antiq. xiii. c. 9.* whose account we take in, as the best supplement in the gospel history : and indeed his assertions in this case, more especially, deserve our notice, inasmuch as he professed himself a *Pharisee*—τη Φαρισαίων αἵρεσει καὶ ἀκολούθων. Now he speaks of this sect as existing in the time of the *Maccabees*, when *Jonathan* the high-priest sent ambassadors to *Sparta*, καὶ αὐτὸν χρόνον τῶν τρεῖς αἵρεσεις τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἦσαν, αἱ περὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων διαφορῶς ὑπελάμβανον, αἱ ἢ μὲν τῶν Φαρισαίων ἐλεγχο, ἢ δὲ Σαδδουκαίων, ἢ τρίτη δὲ Ἑσσηνῶν. We here find the first determinate period of their existence. In general this is certain that, before the captivity, there appeared no religious *sects* among the Jews. The schools of the prophets and the temple service answered all religious purposes. Nor indeed *after* the captivity, while the spirit of prophecy did subsist in the church ; at least, not till after the time of *Malachi*, for it is highly probable that the prophets would never have permitted such innovations and corruptions to have passed without some notice and censure. And moreover, the son of *Sirach*, who generally mentions every most remarkable occurrence in his time, in fact takes no notice at all of this sect, which made such a respectable figure.

From

From these circumstances we are led to conclude, that its origin was in these *later* times, in the times of confusion and distress, under the invasion of *Antiochus*; when the temple-service was interrupted and prophaned: when an attempt was made to introduce the philosophy, the doctrines and manners of the *Greeks*. While the Heathen governors were endeavouring to establish these abominations, in these circumstances 'tis most probable that some eminent doctors arose among the *Jews*, studious of the law, and zealous to preserve their religion. In opposition to the *Grecian* philosophers, they set up for public instructors; and applied themselves to the study of the law and the prophets in such a manner, as might best suit the taste of people: accordingly, in order to gain credit in the world, they affected the appearance of uncommon sanctity. At the same time 'tis observable, that they seem to have intermixed some tenets of the *Grecian* philosophy in their system: viz. a kind of *Stoical* [c] severity in morals—the notion of *fatality* [d] and predestination—and, with regard to the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, their doctrine had the tincture of the [e] *Pythagorean* μετεμψυχωσις.

[c] Φαρισαίων αίρεισι, ήτις παραπλησια τη παρ' Ελλήσι Στωική λεγομένη.

[d] ειμαρμένη τε και Θεία προαίρεσι πάντα—πρασσισθαι τη ειμαρμένη πάντα αξιωντις.

[e] Ψυχής δι πασαι αφαρτοι μεν, μεταβαινου δι εις ιτιρον σωμα την τω αγαθω μορην—τωι δε ρασηνι τε αναβιεν. In this view the as-

With

With what view this was done, whether by way of refinement, or accommodation to the prevailing notion of the times, we presume not to say, since the historian hath simply mentioned the fact without giving any reasons of it.

With regard to the *progress* of this sect, it appears that in the time of *Hyrcaus* the Great, it became very powerful. That prince was for some time a disciple and favourer of that sect; and under his encouragment they greatly flourished: but, on account of some quarrel, which happened about the latter end of his reign, he was quite alienated from them, and began to favour the *Sadducees*. The *Pharisees* in return gave much disturbance to the government, *which they could no longer direct*:
 Τρκανω δε φθονον εκινησεν η ευπραγια παρα των Ιουδαιων.
 μαλιστα δε οι Φαρισαιοι κακως προς αυτον ειχον; αιρεσεις
 οντες μια των Ιουδαιων. In short, they were such masters of address, that they soon made their doctrines popular, and their influence in the state became predominant.

In the reign of *Alexander*, for 28 years, we perceive a convincing proof of their growing power. That prince did indeed endeavour by the interposition of his authority in every shape to discourage and suppress this busy faction; but he was embarrassed by their intrigues, and

sermon of Herod is understood by some, that *John the Baptist* was risen from the dead, and his spirit existed in the person of Christ.

at length tired out and overcome by the obstinacy of their opposition; insomuch that on his death-bed he gave a charge to his wife *Alexandra*, to admit the *Pharisees* into the administration of affairs, as being the only means of peace and security to her government. This she did; and in fact for about nine years the *Pharisees* ruled in the state with an absolute power. *πᾶντα τοῖς Φαρισαίοις ἐπιτρέπει ποιεῖν· οἷς καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἐκέλευτε πειθαρχεῖν· καὶ εἰ τι δὴ ἐκ τῶν νομιμῶν Τρκανός, ὁ πένθερος αὐτῆς, κατέλυσεν, ὧν εἰσενέγκαν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ τὴν πάρεσσαν παραδοσὶν, τὸτο πάλιν ἀποκάλεσθαι· τὸ μὲν ὄνομα τῆς βασιλείας εἶχεν αὐτῇ, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι.* Such was their flourishing state at this time; and we may not without reason presume that their power and influence was all along growing up together with their popularity. We find them afterwards mentioned by the historian near the time of our Saviour in the reign of *Herod the great*: *ετιμῶντο δὲ μάλιστα παρ' αὐτῷ Πολλίων τε ὁ Φαριταῖος καὶ Σαμεῖας ὁ τῆς μαθητῆς.* So much in general we are informed, that they all along had a strong party and influence at court, and more especially among the ladies of the highest distinction: *αὐτοῖς ὑπήκτο ἡ γυναικοκοιτίς.* A remarkable instance of which we shall hereafter have occasion to mention. The history is here brought down to the time of our Saviour, when their religious character more especially comes under consideration.

So

So then from this short account given by the Jewish historian we collect the date of their *origin*, and trace out the steps of their *progress*: viz. in the times of general confusion and corruption in the Jewish church, this new set of teachers arose: by the shew of superior learning and sanctity, they gained reputation among the people: they soon distinguished themselves by the singularity of their notions, and became heads of a sect: and, taking advantage of the people's ignorance and credulity, obtruded on them their own devices for doctrines of the Jewish church, recommended by the venerable name of *traditions of the Elders*.

Let us now apply these considerations to the rise and progress of *Popery*. Certain it is, that in the *primitive* ages, and many centuries after Christ there appear not any foot-steps of this religious sect in the Christian church. We trace out the date of its birth in *later* times, in the times of *confusion* and general ignorance: in these *dark* ages of the church, there arose a new set of instructors, who introduced a new sort of learning, and made new refinements in the scheme of religion: the reputation of uncommon knowledge render'd their character respectable. They withal, out of an ambition to distinguish the dignity of their respective orders, affected the appearance of extraordinary sanctity and scrupulous severity of manners; taking advantage of these circumstances, they exerted their influence over a credulous

credulous illiterate people, and without contradiction vented their several conceits, and in a manner new-model'd the system of Christianity: I say in these *dark ages* certain doctors of the *schools* arose, men of subtle wit and bold enterprize, who, affecting the praise of novelty, and not contented with what was written for their instruction, set themselves to make some new improvements, and went on with their work successfully; and at length framed a new artificial system of divinity. Instead of the gospel simplicity, scholastick subtilties, instead of the plain genuine doctrines of Christ and his apostles, their own cunningly-devised fables and wanton fancies were propagated and imposed on the ignorant people, under the notion of ecclesiastical *traditions*. And with regard to the *governors* of the church, they took care to ingratiate themselves with them; they made themselves instruments of aggrandizing the *papal* power: and, as the general tendency of their doctrines was directed to this point, they were sure of meeting favour at court. And thus at length the doctrines of the *schools* were incorporated into the system of the Catholick religion. *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will they do in the end thereof?* Jer. v. 30, 31.

So much with regard to the circumstances of the *rise* and *progress* of these sects.—Let us

now consider them as acting in a *publick* capacity: 1st, as *rulers* of the *Jews*—2^{dly}, as *interpreters* of the divine law. We find that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* possessed the places of highest dignity and power in church and state: *they sat in Moses seat*. In this their legislative capacity they exercised an arbitrary power over their brethren: they extended their authority beyond measure, *they* bound heavy burdens[e], imposing an obligation on the people to observe their traditions: and at the same time they scrupled not to dispense with the obligation of a divine law. In short, they over-ruled all liberty of private judgment, they required an absolute implicit obedience to their decisions and ordinances; they would brook no contradiction, but put out of their synagogue all those who refused to conform to their judgment and practise.

And is not this also the very case of the *Romanists*? is there not a man, who sitteth in *Peter's* chair, who exalteth himself above all that is most high among men, who stileth himself the *vicar of Christ*—the head of the catholick-church—and in all controversies the supreme and infallible judge? These are indeed pompous titles above the claim of any mortal man.—Let us now observe how these rulers of the Christian church exercise their

[e] καὶα μακρον ὑπὸντις ἡδη καὶ διοικῆσαι τῶν ὅλων ὀφειντο, διῶκειν τε καὶ καταγγίλιν ἐπιλοισιν λυσιν τε καὶ διιν.

usurped power. It is not to be dissembled that they in this respect act in the most *arbitrary* manner, not as servants of one common master, but as *lords* over the people's faith; and, in the plenitude of authority more than apostolical, they bind and loose consciences; they bind heavy burdens, making that necessary to salvation, which God hath not made necessary; and making that unlawful, which God hath not forbidden. And by their *dispensing* power they disanul the obligation even to gospel duties: and who dares to contradict or oppose their decrees? how often in wantonness of tyranny have they put out of their synagogue, and excommunicated those, who worship God in the way which they call heresy!

But, after all, we may well ask, what hath been the *effect* of this ecclesiastical power exercised in such an arbitrary manner? Hath any good redounded from thence to the church? have the principles of christianity been better explain'd and understood? hath the pretence of *infallibility* secur'd the church from the possibility of *error*? No: so far from this, that the purity of the gospel doctrines hath been corrupted by the base alloy of human inventions, unchristian principles and practises authoriz'd; in short, a *new* rule of faith introduc'd, founded merely upon church-authority, and the *commandments of God made of none effect*.—And with regard to their boasted *infallibility*—we cannot omit remarking that on
different

different occasions these Apostolical judges, by their contradictory determinations on the same case, have involuntarily disproved their claim to this high prerogative.

Let us now proceed to consider them as publick *interpreters* of the divine law. In this capacity they often fall under our Saviour's censure, the censure both of ignorance and hypocrisy: *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, ye blind guides—who strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.* It seems they would be thought to possess the *key of knowledge* as the only authoriz'd expounders and judges; but in fact they misunderstood and misapplied the sense of the law: and their skill was chiefly employ'd, not in making researches and endeavours to discover the will of God, but in trifling niceties, and subtile distinctions, and in pointing out the ways to *evade* the moral obligation. On the whole, they abused their authority, and the credulity of the people; their blind followers were misled by their counsels into variety of absurd principles and practices. Here also we may observe their *hypocrisy*; they pretended the highest reverence for the *divine* law, and pleaded the merit of their study and abilities in explaining and enforcing the precepts: but by their practise they really dishonoured the word of God; for, by substituting their own conceits and glosses on the text, which they called the traditions of

the *elders*, and making these a rule of faith and manners, what else was this but virtually to charge the revealed will of God with *insufficiency* and *imperfection*? They made *additions* to the law of God, and put *these* upon the foot of *equal* authority: the supposition on which they proceeded was a proof of their arrogance, and, at the same time, injurious to the character of that system, which they represented so very incomplete and defective as to stand in need of such supplemental aids.

And doth not this censure equally affect the *Romanists*? do not *they* also appropriate to their own church the sole right and privilege of expounding scripture, and determining doctrines, and, under this claim, arbitrarily bind and loose, introducing obligations and dispensations without any divine warrant, imposing whatever matters of faith or practice they think fit on the credulous ignorant people? And how has their study and skill in divinity been chiefly employ'd? not in a diligent and faithful explication and application of the word of *God*, but in framing some new hypotheses---multiplying scholastick subtilties---writing or studying comments on the *master of the sentences*, more than on the *gospel*. And what has been the *effect* of their casuistry and nice distinctions? Doctrines have been render'd more *obscure* and unintelligible, and obligation to duties under some plausible pretences more artfully eluded.---We may withal in this instance perceive

perceive their *hypocrisy*. They indeed pay a superstitious regard to the precepts of the *church* — they observe their own positive institutions with the most rigorous punctuality; at the same time it is notorious on how easy terms they dispense with the more weighty matters of the *moral* law. Surely, in *vain* do they pretend to honour *God* who presume to dishonour his *written* word; yet this they do, who derogate from its perfection and sufficiency by substituting another rule of faith, and insist upon the necessity of taking in *tradition* to supply the deficiency of holy scripture.

In the next place the *Casuiſtry* of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* deserves our notice: *Casuiſtry* in many instances inconsistent, absurd and impious, and, as such, exploded and condemned by our blessed Saviour; and particularly in that case, which gave occasion to the debate in the words of my text. He here exposes their hypocrisy in laying so great stress on an indifferent trifling ordinance, of authority merely *human*, when at the same time they could without scruple dispense with the obligation of the *fifth commandment*. For God indeed commanded, saying, *Honour thy father and thy mother* [f]: a duty, which implies

[f] *Origen* on this passage mentions some particular circumstances, which, on account of their singularity, claim our notice. — Οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ Γραμματεῖς τοιαύτην ἐπαίωμεν τῷ νόμῳ παραδοσὶν ἐκδιδουκασιν ἀσαφεστέρον ἢ τῷ Ευαγγελίῳ κειμένῳ, ἢ ἂν αὐτοὶ ἐπι-

the expression of all acts of natural affection, kindness, reverence, and succour: a duty universal and perpetual, founded in the eternal reason of things, and moreover enforced by a positive command of God; yet we perceive this all at once superseded and dispensed with, by a new sort of Casuistry: *Whosoever shall say, It is a gift, whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honour not his father and mother, he shall be free.* Thus religion is brought in to excuse the breach of filial duty, and piety itself is made the plea for disobeying the express commandment of God.

It surely behoves the *Romanists* to consider how far by parity of reason they are affected in the application of *this* censure to their case.

Βεβληκαμεν ας, ει μη των Εβραίων τις επιδιδουκιν ημιν τα καλα του τοπου
 ὅτως εχούσα. Εσθ' ὅτι, φησιν, οἱ δανεισαι τοις δυστραπηλοῖς περιπληθόντες
 χρευσταῖς, καὶ δυνάμενοις μιν, — μὴ βελομένοις δι' ἀποδόσεσσι το χρῆσ-
 θισαν το οφειλομενον εἰς τοις τῶν πειρητων λογος, εἰς ἐβαλλετο εἰς το γὰρ
 φυλακίαν ὑπο ἑκάστῃ ὡς ἰδμενο τῶν βελομένων αυτοῖς κοινῶν. εἰλεγον
 ἡν ἰσθ' ὅτι τοις οφειλοσι καλα τῆς οἰκίας διακίλοι, Κορβαῖ εἰσιν ὁ
 οφειλεις μοι, τετ' εἰς δωρον. ἀνιθκα γὰρ αὐτο εἰς λογος τῆς εἰς Θεοῖς ἑυσι-
 σίας τοις πειρησι· εἰτα ὁ χρεωτης, ὡς μὴκετι ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ τῷ Θεῷ
 οφειλων, καὶ τῇ εἰς αὐτοῖς ἑυσίβεια οἶον συνκλειτο πρὸς το καὶ μὴ βε-
 λομιν· ἀποδοσαι το χρῆσ· ἔκετι μιν τῇ δανειῇ, ἥδη δὲ εἰς τοις λιγῶν τῶν
 πειρητων τῷ Θεῷ εἰς ὀνοματὸς τῇ δανειῇ· ὅτι δὲ εἰς ὁ δανειτης ποιεῖ τῇ
 χρωτῇ, τετο ποτε τις τῶν υἱῶν τοις γονεσι· καὶ εἰλεγον αυτοῖς ὅτι ὁ αἰ
 εἰς ἡμιν ὠφελῆθης, πατέρῃ ἡ μητέρῃ, τετο ἰσθ' ἀπο τῇ Κορβαῖ λαμβανειν εἰς τῇ
 λογῇ τῶν Θεῶν ἀνακεμμενῇ πειρησι· εἰτα ἀκρωτες οἱ γονεῖς, ὅτι Κορβαῖ εἰσιν
 ἀνακεμμενοι τῷ Θεῷ το δίδομενοι αυτοῖς, ἔκετι ἐβελόλο λαμβανειν, καὶ πα-
 ρε εχρῆζον τῇ ἀναγκαιῶν ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν. Οἱ ἡν Πρεσβύτεροι τοιαυτῇ παρα-
 δοσι εἰς τῆς ἀπο τῇ λαμ εἰλεγον, ὅτι ὅτις αἰ τῇ πατέρῃ τῇ μητέρῃ εἰπῇ το δίδο-
 μενοι τῇ αὐτῶν Κορβαῖ εἰσαι καὶ δωρον, ἐτ' ἔκετι εἰς οφειλετης πρὸς τοις
 πατέρα ἡ μητέρα εἰς δώσει τῶν πρὸς τῆς τῇ βίῃ χρεας. Ταυτῇ ἡν εἰλεγ-
 χῇ ὡς εἰς ὕψους εχουσαι παραδοσι ὁ Σωτήρ, ἀλλ' ἐναντιωμένη τῇ ἐβελῇ
 τῇ Θεῷ.

In

In truth the *Casuistry* of their schoolmen as interpreters of the divine law is too notorious to be dissembled; and Jesuitical evasions are become infamous even to a *proverb*, and condemned by many Romanists themselves. In their decision on nice and difficult points, the praise of wit and sophistry is more regarded by them, than the *practical* use or purposes of *edification*. The subtilty of their distinctions without difference, and the art of explaining away the obvious meaning in terms ambiguous or unintelligible, as it is too much refined for common sense and common honesty, has been often made the instrument of base purposes; and so applied, as to puzzle the cause which it pretended to clear up, and by raising a mist to carry on the fraud unperceived, and in the event to elude the obligation of the laws which contradicted their system.

Thus in the case of *oaths*: tho' they are in general allow'd to bind the conscience, yet we have been told by some of their notable casuists, that, where the interests of the *church* are concerned, the case is *special*, and faith is not to be kept with *Hereticks*—and that subjects are absolved from their allegiance to an *Heretical* sovereign. Look back into the history of former times, you will find the *effects* of this doctrine exemplified in cruel persecutions and wicked conspiracies; and Protestants on many occasions have been so treated, as if

they were not entitled to the offices of common justice and *humanity*.

And further with regard to their *corban*, or votive gifts for pious uses, it is not to be wondered that their casuistry should be determined in favour of *such* applications, since they are interested parties in the case. If, upon this occasion, a man of plain common sense should alledge *that charity begins at home*, and that he is under a prior obligation to provide for those, to whom he stands engaged by a prior relation of nature, he will be perhaps told by some holy father, that all *private* regards must give way to *publick*, and that it is more meritorious to give for the service of the *altar*, than to provide for his *parents*—and that in such a case, where the interests of the church are so much affected, he might venture to dispense with the obligation to the fifth commandment. Thus it hath often happened that the treasury of holy mother church hath been enrich'd with large donations; which indeed, more agreeably to the will of God, might have been applied to domestick uses, where they were expected and wanted.

But moreover, besides the charge of ignorance and hypocrisy, our Saviour denounces woe against the Pharisees for their *injustice* and cruelty to the people: that they, *who sat in Moses seat*, who were the authoritative interpreters of the law, defrauded them of the means of instruction: that they took away
from

from them *the key of knowledge*—that they really discouraged free inquiries, and the study of true religion and virtue: *that they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; they entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hindered.*

And are not the *Romanists* equally affected by *this* censure? do not they, who claim to themselves an exclusive right of interpreting the divine law, industriously keep their people in the dark, under a blind implicit faith, in every article imposed by church authority? do they not in every shape discourage a free examination into the principles of their religion? do they not in the most emphatical sense *take away the key of knowledge* from the people, by not allowing them the free and unlicensed use of the holy *scriptures*, which were written for their learning?—But after all—what *reason* do they alledge in vindication or excuse of such proceeding?—*Such* indeed, as would equally exclude the use of every good thing in the world; for the very best things may be *abused*. Do they say, that this proceeds from a principle of tenderness for the people, lest they should *wrest the scripture to their destruction*? but what then should be duly inferred from thence? not the *exclusion* but the better *regulation* of the means, or the necessity of greater care in giving instruction? But, after all, what is the true cause? is it not

rather the apprehension of some *danger* from a free enquiry, and from making the holy scriptures the test of truth, and the rule of faith? *for every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.*

Carry on your views throughout their whole ecclesiastical polity—their private as well as publick capacity—their disposition and manners—principles and practises—you will find the *Romanists* guilty of those very faults which our Saviour has so severely condemned in the conduct of the *Pharisees*.

It is well known that the common people, being merely superficial observers, are mostly affected by external appearances and ostentation of piety. Now the *Pharisees*, being artful masters of address, were ready to improve this disposition to their own advantage. They were continually attempting some plausible novelty, which might engage their attention; they made some new refinements on the law of Moses: they introduced many new rites and ordinances; these they dignified with the title of traditionary doctrines. On the observance of these, they laid the greatest stress: and on this account, in the eye of the world, they appeared more *holy* than other men.--- Thus, with regard to the fourth commandment, they were not contented with the plain obvious sense, but they added their own glosses and comment, extending the obligation,
and

and straining the letter to an unwarrantable degree of rigour; insomuch as, out of a principle of piety, to prohibit acts of *charity* and *humanity*. In short, they were fond of singularity, and studious to make innovations; and, to keep up a greater shew of holiness, they brought in several new institutions; these came superadded to the *Levitical* system, which in itself was sufficiently operose and burdensome.

And is not this the case of the *Romanists*? do not they act upon the same *principle*, with a view to the same *end*? have not they, through an ostentation of extraordinary piety, introduced into the church, a set of new rites and institutions? and by such innovations, have corrupted the simplicity of the gospel? In truth, *their* ritual is become more operose and burdensome than the *Levitical*, from which *Christ* hath made us free. Insomuch, that to be an adroit master of ceremonies and postures, is a principal recommendation of a Priest officiating. They have made religion an *artificial* system, and are singularly fond of their own devices. To give weight and credit to these, is their chief ambition; and, in fact, the precepts of the *church* are more punctually observ'd than *gospel* duties: and every new-devised ordinance of human invention is generally recommended with better address, and defended with greater zeal, than the fundamental articles

cles of the Christian faith. And indeed, the reason of such proceeding is apparent: for, where any doctrine imposed, wants the sanction of a divine authority, there all aids of *human* sophistry, and human authority, become necessary to give it credit and support.

Thus to mention a case in point---If some eminent doctor in the schools should take the liberty of making some new refinement in the Christian system, and should superadd *five* other sacraments to those of Christ's institution, pleading in his behalf I know not what *tradition* of the fathers in the church to give them an air of credit and authority, what would probably be the effect of such an attempt? It is easy to imagine, that the great reputation of the doctor, and the credulity of ignorant people, would concur to make way for the admission of this new and antisciptural doctrine; and probably also, some sinister motives might fall in to facilitate the success: and why may not one pious fraud, or ingenious device, be admitted on the same footing with others? what has been, may again be in like circumstances: 'tis prudent to let things take their course: 'tis dangerous to make an over-nice scrutiny, which might either prove, or disprove too much. Should such a step be taken, uneasy apprehensions would immediately follow: *the craft is in danger*. Demetrius and all the craftsmen at once take the alarm; and great is *Diana of the Ephesians!*
Now

Now the assertion and defence of *traditional* doctrines is made the common cause, and test of Catholick piety : and now all art and subtilty of wit is employ'd to embarrass the dispute, and confound common sense, and the language of the schools to over-rule the authority of the gospel. By these means, various errors and absurdities have been adopted, sanctified, and canonized. Thus Penance, Extreme-Union, and even *Matrimony* were enrolled in the number. And, (which is the most untoward, and mischievous circumstance of this proceeding) blunders [g] once established must be perpetuated, since they cannot be retracted consistently with the supposition of *infallibility*.

But further with regard to outward *appearances* we find the *Pharisees* took care, that their garb and habit, as well as manners, should be distinguished by an ostentatious kind of *singularity* : they loved to walk in long cloathing : they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments. By this distinction they designed to attract the eyes, and command the reverence of the people. God had indeed [Deut. vi. 8.] ordered the children of

[g] A blunder certainly gave occasion to the admitting matrimony in the number of the seven sacraments. A monk, who took the vulgate version for his authentic scripture, found an express proof of this, viz. *Hoc sacramentum est magnum* : the brethren run away with the sound of the word sacramentum, and admitted the doctrine.

Israel to bind the words of the law *for a sign upon their hands*, and that they should be *as frontlets between their eyes*: probably with this intention that they rather in a *moral*, than a *literal* sense, should have his commandments before their eyes. But they carried their thoughts no further than the bare *letter*; and that only out of a principle of vanity. They were superstitiously nice and punctual in this respect, imagining, that in the sight of the people those would be esteemed the most zealous observers of the law, who, in the literal sense, carried the greatest share of it about their persons: and that it was no small merit, or praise of their piety, to make some fair outward shew of it, in the very ornaments of their dress.

And is not the like practice observable in the behaviour of the *Romanists*? do not *they* affect the like ostentation of piety in the exterior *appearances* of their several *habits* of distinction? Indeed many of their institutions seem entirely calculated for this very purpose. They also *love to walk in long cloathing, and to be seen of men*. Look upon the *religious* of several denominations: what a pride do they seem to take in the supposed dignity of their respective orders, glorying in their honourable badge of distinction, and demand a suitable degree of reverence from the deluded people, as if the singularity of their garb derived a real sanctity on their character, and the merits
of

of their respective saints, of *Dominick*, *Benedict*, *Francis*, *Ignatius*, &c. were conveyed, or represented in the regular *habits* of their followers. Be it observed, that we do not here simply condemn the mere *distinction* of habits, but the *superstitious* regard which is paid to them: and the false notions, which are often instilled into the minds of devout ignorant people, when they are *taught* to believe that reliques, crucifixes, beads, pictures, &c. contain in them some inherent, or derivative virtue; or that the particoloured garments of the priest convey some significant emblem of piety, or aid to devotion. We complain that the superstition of the people in such cases is encouraged, as a meritorious act of religion: they certainly appear to lay too great stress on these inconsiderable points: their imagination adds an importance to trifles; the cordelier will not part with an inch of his dignified cord; yea, the bigotted friar thinks, that in his blessed scapularly he carries about him the badge of his salvation.

It hath been in general remark'd, that the *Pharisees* made the greatest shew of their piety in the punctual observance of the *ceremonial* law: herein they affected to appear more holy than other men. *They made clean the outside of the cup and platter*: they used frequent sprinklings and washings, by which they would be thought to cleanse themselves from

from all impurity, contracted by their mixture with prophane things and persons, in common life. They by no means defraud the priest of his dues: they were punctual in these minute matters: *they paid tithe of mint, anise, and cummin*; at the same time they neglected duties of more weighty importance. On the whole, they observed ritual ordinances with a rigorous nicety, especially such as were founded on authority merely *human*, and the tradition of the *elders*. In cases of *this* kind they were very exemplary, and gain'd the reputation of extraordinary sanctity; their character was held in reverence by the people: and on this account their authority and example was like to prove more dangerous in its influence.

And do the *Romanists* fall short of the *Pharisees* in this respect? do not they in the *literal*, as well as *moral* sense, make *clean the outside of the cup and platter*? Yea they also have their washings and sprinklings, their holy water, their censer of frankincense, &c. they appear to be more concerned about these *external* applications, than the *moral* purposes contained in them. They also shew a most conscientious punctuality in certain minute matters, in paying tithe of *mint, anise, and cummin*, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law, mercy, justice, and judgment; while they defraud the service of the altar in a more important branch by the impropriation of revenues, which regularly should be appropriated to

to the maintenance of the parochial clergy. They seem rather to invert the order of things, and, instead of attending to the plain moral duties of the gospel, place the main part of their religion in the observance of certain ritual minute circumstantial points, which God hath not required in his written law: such as are rather the effects of mere *will-worship*, which we find on a like occasion condemned by St. Paul; and indeed, the chief praise of their piety is contained in such works of supererogation, *touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using* [or the abuse, *τη ἀποχρησει*] *after the commandments and doctrines of men; which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and in neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.*

By such arts the Pharisees kept up the outward fair appearances of religion; and, in consequence of this, their reputation and influence among the people. But he, *who knew what was in man*, condemns them in this respect as guilty of insincerity and hypocrisy; he likens them to whited sepulchres, appearing beautiful outwardly, but within full of all uncleanness. They boasted of their *alms* and *charities*, and would be esteemed more beneficent than other men; but all this was mere artifice and a *false* shew: for they are censured by our Saviour as an *avaricious* and rapacious

rapacious set of men. It seems the opinion of their sanctity and probity gave them access and confidence among well-dispos'd people; they wanted not address to improve their interest: till at length by some means or other, they got into their hand the possession, or direction of their fortunes; *they devoured widows houses, and for a pretence made long prayers*: their piety was downright *hypocrisy*, and their prayers a mockery of religion.

It behoves the *Romanists* to consider how far they are affected by the reason also of *this* censure---to consider by what means such vast acquisitions have been added to the patrimony of the church. Have not their clergy used their sanctity for a cloak of *covetousness*, and by undue influence over the purses, as well as the consciences of the *laity*, extorted large donations? What hath been the effect of penances, indulgences, and commutations, and such like pious frauds? is it not notorious that the fortunes of many private families have been transfer'd to the church for superstitious uses, for the endowment of chantries, for masses, and making long prayers for the souls of the deluded votaries?

But that, which principally fell under our Saviour's censure, was their sinister *motive*, upon which the Pharisees acted, such as destroyed the merit of actions, otherwise laudable; their alms, their fastings, their prayers are condemned,

condemned, as not proceeding *from* a principle of true piety, but from vanity, *that they might have glory of men*: it is found by experience, *that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: the bad intention marreth the goodness of the whole action. For the Pharisees did *all* this merely for ostentation, *that they might appear unto men*, and that, by such appearances of virtue, they might attract the admiration and esteem of the populace. *And verily they have their reward*: the applause of men, which they seek; and the condemnation, which they deserve from God, who searcheth the heart.

And do not the *Romanists* appear to act upon *like* principles and *motives*? Look upon the whole system of their religion, as laid down in their pontificals, rituals, breviaries, &c.---what else can you think of the greatest part, but as a scheme calculated merely for external appearances, and ostentation of piety? *all their works they also do, to be seen of men*. With regard to their boasted charities---we cannot help observing, that the motive and manner of giving spoils the merit of the gift, and various donations for pious uses, stand as so many monuments of the donors vain-glory.

With regard to their stated *fasts* as well as *feasts*---these are multiplied to a great degree, without necessity, without use. They indeed, like the Pharisees, magnify the merit of their bodily services: *they appear unto men to fast*. Such outward exercises of rigour

and austerities tend to beget in the minds of the people, an high opinion of their sanctity: they are ambitious of popularity, herein they succeed, and from thence draw no small advantage: they seek the praise of *men*, rather than the praise which cometh from *God*: and from the manner of their expressing their zeal in points of religion, we are led to conclude, that they would sooner venture to transgress one of the ten commandments, than an indifferent positive institution, or ordinance of their church.

But after all--in what other view can we consider such acts of bodily discipline, than as instrumental means in order to a moral end? and we shall be convinced, that the outward shew will not avail, without the principle of internal piety. *For a man to afflict his soul, to bow down his head like a bull-rush--wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day unto the Lord?*—And in the next place, as to their prayers, their multiplicity and prolixity, their *μακρολογία* and *βασιτολογία*, both their matter and manner favour too much of the *Pharisee*; so much affectation of the form of godliness that one would be at a loss to find out the power. If indeed we look into their churches, we may perceive a great deal of religious business carried on at every altar, a number of masses, *Ave-Maries*, prayers to saints, &c. We may see the priests, not only standing in the synagogues, but in the corners of the streets, in publick

publick places, to be seen of men, and muttering over the imposed talk of certain portions of their breviary. This may perhaps, in the eyes of the common people, carry the appearance of extraordinary devotion; but surely, no unprejudic'd man can say, that this is a *rational* worship of God, or the true spirit of christian piety.

Certain it is that our Saviour chiefly condemns the Pharisees for their dissimulation and *hypocrisy*: but he withal taxes them with a heavy charge of *pride* and *vain glory*. Notwithstanding the outward shew of holiness and affectation of humility, they were the most arrogant and ambitious men, fond of popular praise, and power, and every honourable mark of distinction: *they loved the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi.*

And are not the *Romanists* involved also in *this* censure? Consider the supreme head of the church universal, his usurped titles and pompous prerogatives: what less is implied in his claim of supremacy and absolute domination over the Lord's heritage? doth he not exalt himself not only above all bishops, who are his *equals* in authority, but also above the kings of the earth? do not his legates, by virtue of a derivative eminency, claim the uppermost seat and *precedency* of all others?—And moreover, hath he not, according to the plan of the Jewish polity, constituted his great coun-

cil, or sanedrim, consisting of seventy *cardinals*, a superior order of institution not *apostolical*, but of creation and use merely *political*; princes of the congregation, and rulers of the people, the ornaments of his grandeur, and instruments of his power?—and yet this great tyrant of the church, in mockery of christian humility, stiletth himself *servorum servus*.

But here I cannot omit making a remark, which to some perhaps may seem paradoxical, viz. that popery, as such, is an *antiepiscopal* scheme, and that *Presbyterianism* is really founded in *Popish* principles. For the assertion of the Pope's *supremacy* virtually annihilates the distinction of orders in the church upon the apostolical plan. And, upon this supposition, the original *equality* of bishops, as such, no longer subsists: but the distinction of orders is industriously confounded, and the episcopate is virtually absorbed in the presbyterate. And that this is really so is sufficiently apparent from a book of undeniable authority, the Catechismus ad Parochos, where this question is put in form “Quot sunt ordines in ecclesia? Resp. “Septem.” And pray now in the enumeration of these seven, do you find that *episcopacy* is named at all?—No: there is no mention at all made of it as a distinct *order*, but only of the Presbyterate, in which it was suppos'd to be involved. And to what *end* was all this? that all spiritual jurisdiction might appear, not inherent in the order of bishops, as such, but, as derived from
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the *Pope*, and conveyed in the delivery of the pall. Whoever reads father Paul's history of the council of Trent will plainly perceive the uneasy perplexity and distress of the court of Rome on this interesting point; and may from hence account for the variety of artifices used to elude or over-rule the debate on this head. I say then, on the whole, that popery, as such, being a leveling or degrading scheme, and all in order to aggrandize one man above all others in the Christian church, is so far *Antiepiscopal* and virtually *Presbyterian*. And, on the other hand, the assertion of episcopacy, with its inherent rights and powers, is the most effectual defence of the Protestant cause, and bullwark against popery.

But further, if we carried on our views throughout all the religious orders in the church of Rome, we should find them by parity of reason also involved in the charge of ambition and pride, which our Saviour brings against the *Pharisees*. They all appear, amidst the professions of voluntary humility, infected with this Pharisaical leaven, they all strive for the uppermost seats, and distinguishing marks of honour: they all claim preeminence over the laity, and at the same time have their several contentions among themselves for precedence and superiority. Even the mendicant friar will pride himself in the dignity of his profession, and demand a suitable respect to his person. And as to that particular instance of ambition

and vanity, to be called of men *Rabbi Rabbi*— this has even been a principal object among the doctors of the church. Men of speculative leisure, and busy wit, will ever be making some new effort: the received system may probably be thought too plain and simple; something more artificial is requisite to please the capricious taste of the age: a new language at least is introduc'd: perhaps, some refinement, some innovation, either in matter or manner, is attempted; they think it expedient to distinguish themselves by some singularity of principles or practises, to strike out something new or uncommon, which may excite the curiosity and attention of the publick: there is the appearance of some boldness and bravery in advancing, and some share of wit is shewn in supporting a paradox: every novelty will have some admirers and abettors. Thus the author by degrees gets into vogue and acquires a respectable name among the *Doctors* of the church, and perhaps at length obtains what he had been aiming at, viz. the honour of becoming the founder or head of some sect, philosophical or religious; and from thenceforward to be called of men *Rabbi Rabbi*.

Thus it happen'd in the dark ages of the church: the Scholastick doctors, men of the most subtle wit, struck out some new light; some new hypothesis, or curious notion was started, supported and improv'd; the authors acquired

acquired high reputation for their uncommon learning, revered by their respective followers, distinguished and dignified by their several titles of honour: such as *Doctor Angelicus, Subtilis, Profundus, Irrefragabilis, &c.* And indeed there seems not a more probable cause, which has given birth to errors and heresies than this ambition of appearing the head of a sect, and being called by men *Rabbi*. But, after all, it behoves us to consider that this pharisaical vanity is inconsistent with our *Christian* character; it behoves us to remember the admonition which our Saviour gave to his disciples, in contradiction to the practise of the Pharisees: *but be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and ye are brethren.*

I shall now mention another quality in the character of these Pharisees, the very reverse of dissimulation and hypocrisy: viz. the violence of the zeal which they exerted, in order to increase the numbers of their followers, and enhance the credit of their sect. *They compassed sea and land to make one proselyte: and, when he is made, they make him two-fold more the child of hell than themselves.* This they call'd a zeal for the glory of God, and the interests of his religion: whereas the true motive of this proceeding was no other than their own ambition; and the end, the advancement of their own honour and interest. This was what they principally aimed at, and under false pretences carried on with success. They did indeed

make a convert of an Heathen : by baptism and circumcision they admitted him into the Jewish church, but so, as to make him not properly and truly a disciple of *Moses*, but rather of the *Pharisees* ; and, in order to principle him aright, they give him an adulterated system of morality, not the genuine precepts of the divine law, but the rules of their particular sect and the tradition of the elders.

And do the *Romanists* fall short of the *Pharisees* in this branch of their character ? are not *they* equally zealous in making converts to their sect ? *they also compass sea and land* for this purpose : no art is wanting for the conduct, no pains spared in the execution of the scheme. Bigottry and superstition carry always with them a busy spirit ; these zealots think they do God service, when they make themselves thus instrumental to increase the number of his elect, and daily add to the church such as they think could not otherwise be saved. Indeed we are far from condemning this principle ; but we rather wish it was engaged in a better cause. *They have indeed a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*, for in the present case it is misapplied and perverted. They are indeed indefatigable in the work of making converts : but converts to *Popery*, rather than to true *Christianity* : and more labour is gone through in teaching the precepts of their church, the commandments of men, than the will of God, and the doctrines of the gospel. And it is generally

generally observed, that their converts are more violent in the expression of their zeal; and for want of true knowledge, which would moderate their judgment, are soon made two-fold more bigots than themselves.

It must indeed be allowed, that they are sincere and assiduous in their endeavours, and skillful in all arts of address: *they become all things unto all men, that they may gain some to their party.* And I cannot help adding my wishes, that Protestants would exert an equal zeal in propagating the principles of true christianity. But in *this* respect the Romanists are more successful, as well as more industrious. We perceive the different effect of *their* application among the Indians in America. They interest themselves greatly in making them converts, upon reasons *political*, as well as *religious*; they have much the advantage in the very appearance of things, and in the manner of address to a superstitious and ignorant people: for they are taught to model and represent the Christian scheme in such a way, as best suits the disposition and notions of the parties, to whom it is proposed. Besides they have a great deal of external shew and parade in religion, such as is calculated to excite attention and admiration. They give out their lessons of christianity together with their *beads, reliques, crucifixes, &c.* in which there is supposed to be some sacred *virtue* or charm. Now
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the application of such material sensible tokens is apt to have more effect upon uncivilized and barbarous minds, than the most forcible abstract reasoning, or the simplicity of the gospel doctrines. And in fact, upon examination of these converts, it has been found, that the principles of religion which they had learned, were only those of corrupt *Popish* christianity.

On this occasion we justly complain of the Romanists, and are led to remark the great disservice, which they have done to the common cause of Christianity. For, since they set up an exclusive claim and privilege of being the holy catholic church, and with an high hand obtrude their doctrines for the word of God, doctrines of their own invention, yea, and contrary to *reason*, as well as scripture—what hath been the effect of such proceeding? it seems many [b] inquisitive thinking men, upon discovery of several fallacies in the arguments, and frauds in the managers, have been induced to question the truth of the whole *Christian* system, and to become scepticks or deists, rejecting that revelation as unworthy of God, which, as understood by the Romanists, appears

[b] 'Tis probable that a certain noble author of our own nation, who has wrote some pieces in behalf of infidelity, fell into this snare, being misled by such observations. He had long lived in *Popish* countries: Popery was the only scheme of christianity with which he was acquainted: a person of his acute inquisitive genius could not but discern the falsehood of this: here he had room to raise objections: he seems merely from this misrepresentation of Christianity prompted, to argue against the whole system.

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to contain notions contrary to common sense, and the principles of reason.

We allow that the Romanists express a warm zeal for their religion: we approve the principle, and wish it was rightly directed, a zeal according to knowledge; but upon what probable grounds, or under what obligations, either general or special, they should be induced to act offensively, and to make converts in this Protestant kingdom, of which they are subjects, in opposition to the laws of the land, as well as the light of the gospel, is not easily to be accounted for. Yet it is found by experience, that this busy plausible principle of zeal often prompts them to unnecessary and hazardous undertakings. There is a praise of some bravery in the adventure; and every instance of success is more meritorious in proportion to the difficulty and danger of the attempt. Perhaps the lenity of our government may be perverted into a motive of encouragement: and, as they are not restrained by the execution of sanguinary laws, or fear of any punishment, they may creep into houses, and make converts among a vicious and unthinking people. For indeed, while we consider the state of morals in this licentious age, we may perceive withal less reason to wonder at such an event; for where probably should Popery gain ground, but among those, who do not appear to act upon any christian principle? for it can hardly be

be supposed, that a well-instructed christian can be a papist.

Thus have I drawn a parallel between the practises of the *Pharisees* and the *Romanists* in many remarkable instances: it now remains that I consider the common *principle* upon which the corrupt practices of both these sects are built; thus laid down by Christ in the last clause of my text: *Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect through your traditions.*

Now since the influence of this principle hath become so extensive, it will not be improper to enter into a particular disquisition on this head; and to trace out the *rise* and *progress* of this new church-authority, which was, and is still advanced in opposition to the standing rule of God's written word.

1st. It is to be observed, that by the tradition of the elders, primarily and originally, nothing more was meant than the concurrent sense and judgment of the Jewish church universally received, and handed down; and accordingly, in controverted cases, properly applied for the better understanding of the law and the prophets. So far as *this*, their proceeding appears very *just* and rational; as in all countries common usage is with good reason taken in, in order to ascertain the indeterminate meaning of any law. Now the *Pharisees* professed a most religious regard for the traditions of the elders; so far right, while they kept to the *primary*
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and original intention. But by degrees they perverted this principle to unwarrantable purposes ; they extended it beyond due bounds ; as it was a point of some latitude, there was room for refinement and artifice, and this indeed was soon practised. There arose in the church certain doctors of the law, men of ambition and bold enterprize, more fond of their own conceits, than of the written rule. By the subtilty of their distinctions, they confounded the true notion of things, and thereby opened the way for imposing any specious fraud on the people. In short, they foisted in new doctrines and practices of their own invention or improvement. These came recommended under the venerable name of traditions : these, as such, were implicitly received by their followers, and all along continually enlarged and refined by various additional glosses, and handed down as the established doctrines of the Jewish church. And thus a new scheme of rites and ordinances, of institution merely *human*, was incorporated into the system of their *religion*.

Such was the state of things in our Saviour's time, which gave occasion to those censures, which generally accompanied the mention of those persons. And, in order to enlarge our views of the case, it will be of some use to take in the account of the Jewish historian ; who thus briefly sets down the distinguishing character of this sect, and that of their antagonists

gonists the Sadducees.—B. xiii. 10. νομιμα πολλὰ τινὰ παρεδοσαν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ἐκ πατέρων διαδοχῆς; ἀπερ ἡ ἀναγεγραπταὶ ἐν τοῖς Μωσέως νομοῖς· καὶ δια τοῦτο ταῦτα το Σαδδουκαῖον γενθ· ἐκβάλλει, λεγόν· ἐκεῖνα δὲν ἡγεῖσθαι τὰ γεγραμμένα, τὰ δὲ ἐκ παραδόσεως τῶν πατέρων μὴ τηρεῖν· καὶ περὶ τούτων ζήτησεις αὐτοῖς καὶ διαφορὰς γενεῶν· σινεβαινε μεγάλας, τῶν μὲν Σαδδουκαίων τοὺς εὐποροὺς μόνον πειθόντων, το δὲ δημοτικὸν οὐχ ἵπομενον αὐτοῖς ἐχόντων· τῶν δὲ Φαρισαίων τὸ πλῆθος συμμαχόν ἐχόντων.

Now, according to the account here given of the Sadducees by the Jewish historian, from the general face of things, they appear to be less in the wrong *than* the Pharisees. They refused to admit the traditions of the elders as a rule of faith and manners: and surely their conduct is not blameable on *this* account; they acted on a right principle, when justly stated and applied. But it is probable that they carried this on to an unreasonable degree of rigour, and were influenced by wrong motives, being not willing to admit the probable proof of any doctrines, which suited not their inclinations. Nothing less than the direct and express letter of scripture would satisfy them; this they strictly insisted on: they disallowed the manner of reasoning used by the Pharisees, drawn from the general scope and tenour of scripture, and rejected their deductions, though they appeared to be virtually contained in the premises.

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'Tis not improbable that in the troubled state of affairs, under the domination of Antiochus and the Heathen governors, the Jews, mixing with the Greeks, might receive some tincture of their philosophy, which they adopted into their several systems. Accordingly the Pharisees, on account of the rigidity of their principles and severity of manners, are represented as a sort of *Stoicks*, *παραπλησια αἵρεσει τη παρ Ἑλλησι Στωικῇ λεγομένη*. So, on the other hand, the Sadducees, who consisted chiefly of the richer sort, approached nearer to the *Epicureans*, being libertines in principle and practice, and on this account unwilling to allow the immortality of the soul, and a future state, &c.—The supposition of what is here suggested is not improbable.—But, however this may be, 'tis to be observed, that the Pharisees, at their first setting out (as indeed most of the religious sects generally in the beginning have some shew of reason on their side), were favoured by certain advantageous circumstances, which concurred to establish their credit. It seems they had a dispute with the Sadducees, a sect of more loose principles, concerning the immortality of the soul—the resurrection of the body—the existence of angels, and spirits, &c. These were abstruse points, the proof of which was not direct and expressly delivered in scripture, but to be inferred from analogy and general tenour. Now in managing this argument they shewed

so much skill, and succeeded so well, that they gained the highest reputation among the people, being esteemed the better disputants and more orthodox in opinion. For, in the course of their reasoning, they drew their arguments, in support of their hypothesis, from the main *scope* and drift of holy writ, and confirmed the interpretation in their favour, by the traditionary judgment, by the universal consent and testimony of the Jewish church; in which the doctrine was always understood in that sense, for which they contended; whereas their adversaries were so unreasonable, as to admit nothing by way of proof, but the express *letter* of scripture: to this they strictly adhered, and shewed no manner of regard to any arguments deduced from the general scope and tendency of the whole.

Now here it must be observed, that all this while the matter of dispute was supposed to be some doctrine contained in *scripture*. And the Pharisees, who applied themselves more closely to the study of the law, were thought to have hit upon a more rational way of interpretation, by taking in the supplemental aid of tradition. And, as at the same time they carried with them the appearance of a more rigorous punctuality, and severity in manners; they soon ingratiated themselves with the common people, insomuch, that their doctrines were generally received with approbation, and their persons treated with a singular reverence.

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Thus the Pharisees were grown into high esteem; and now, feeling the increase of their influence, they soon began to have ambitious views, and make their popularity the instrument of advancing their secular interests in every shape; they abused the credulity of the people to their own advantage, and by degrees became lords over their faith; they acted in an arbitrary manner without controul, sitting in the seat of *Moses*; and introduced a variety of ritual observances, not warranted, or enjoined by the Levitical law, but merely creatures of their own invention, under the notion of traditions of the elders. Thus did they misapply that respectable name to sanctify their own doctrines, and every religious ceremony which they thought fit to impose.

But here we must also observe the manner of their proceeding, as being conducted with the greatest art and cunning. For they laid down this postulatam, as the foundation of their scheme, viz. that the law delivered by God, was two-fold: the *written* law (which indeed is properly and only such) and the exposition of that law by *oral tradition*, delivered first by God to Moses, and then by him to Joshua, and so handed down to the Prophets, and by them to the doctors of the great synagogue. As matters thus stood, these authorized interpreters of the law, who *sate in Moses seat*, these masters and managers of traditions, had it in their power to adopt and

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sanctify any religious usages, which they thought proper. And by the event it appeared, that they had in this respect indulged their fancies, even to a degree of wantonness, continually making some new improvements upon the scheme of ritual ordinances, till, at length, the vital substantial parts of religion were entirely lost in hypocrisy and superstition.

Such was the state of things when our Saviour came among them: and from the gospel history it appears, that they made the main of their religion to consist in the observance of certain *rites* and *ceremonies*; and those for the most part not strictly legal, and of *divine* institution, but merely traditional, and of *human* appointment: their attention was wholly engaged in explaining and recommending their own *oral* traditions, the creatures of their own imagination; so that the written law of God was but imperfectly studied, and explained by these doctors, and not much regarded by the people. In fact, the state of religion was then entirely corrupted: *they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and made void the commandments of God through their traditions.*

The application of what I have offered, is so very obvious, that, while I have been speaking of the *Pharisees*, you might imagine that all along I have been describing the *Romanists*. Such a similitude there appears in both these sects as to principle and practice, springing
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from the same common source, the tradition of the elders.

You will carry along with you what hath been observed as to the manner in which the Pharisees managed their dispute with the Sadducees : viz. that, for determining the controverted sense of scripture, they appealed to the tradition of the *elders*, or, in other words, to the concurrent judgment and testimony of the Jewish church. This they did with good success, as well as good reason : the argument of authority, joined to the reason of the *thing*, carried with it conviction ; they were generally thought to be on the right side of the question ; and the sect of the Pharisees was now held by the people in the highest esteem.

You will further observe the arrogance and presumption of these men, upon gaining this advantage. They soon abused the credulity and implicit faith of the people, and, under the plausible notion of traditional doctrines, obtruded their own fond devices.

You will also observe the bold step which they took to justify this proceeding : viz. they advanced a precarious supposition, that there was an *unwritten*, as well as a *written* law, delivered immediately by God, and all along preserved in the church : that the latter was to be interpreted consistently with the former, of which they were the sole guardians and directors. On this foundation, they built that

absurd system of religious worship, and all that variety of corruptions both in principle and practise, which gave occasion to those reproofs and censures, so frequently denounced against them by our blessed Saviour.

Let us now apply these observations to Catholick tradition, as understood and used by the church of *Rome*. How alike the *occasion*, which gave rise and reputation to both these sects?—how alike the *progress*, and the several *effects*? viz. that medly of corruptions springing from the same common cause?

Here then it is to be observed, that, whenever any Hereticks arose denying any fundamental article of faith, the orthodox fathers of the primitive church, in the course of the dispute with them, did, by way of additional support to their arguments drawn from scripture, appeal to *Catholick* tradition, or to the concurrent testimony and universal agreement of the christian church in all times, and all places, as understanding the scripture in that very sense which they maintained. This manner of reasoning generally produced its due effect, the confutation of error and the establishment of truth.—Thus Catholick tradition became a popular and venerable name.

In these circumstances of the church, there arose certain ambitious designing men: they soon perceived what advantage might be made of this principle, and the ignorance of the people under their direction. They accordingly ventured

ventured on the experiment ; and in this instance, as they acted under no controul, they indulged their own fancies in the invention, and, in fact, introduced many new doctrines and ordinances : and *tradition*, of which they were the judges and managers, was made the instrument of their policy, and was applied to give a sanction to their novelties, and to recommend them to the general acceptance with an air of credit and authority. Succeeding doctors of the church, and subtile schoolmen, took the liberty of making some refinements upon the scheme of their predecessors : the pious frauds were carried on with success ; the people implicitly admitted whatever doctrines were imposed on them under this respectable notion of church *traditions*. These, through the great variety of new fancies, were continually encreased ; and at last were so managed, as to be incorporated into the general system, and to be put upon the same foot of authority with the doctrines contained in the scriptures themselves.

Now it is observable, that, in *this* respect also, the Romanists copy after the Pharisees ; they make use of the same indirect means in order to the same end. And accordingly they also distinguish the law of God into two kinds, viz. the *written* law contained in the books of the old and new testament—and the *unwritten* law, or the will of God delivered by word of mouth from Jesus Christ and his apostles, and

transmitted down to the present times, through the successive doctors of the church by *oral* tradition, of which they themselves are the sole judges and dispensers. Thus it came to pass, that inventions, merely *human, unwritten*, yea and *antiscryptural* doctrines, have been propagated, authorized, and sanctified under the venerable name of church-traditions. And on this treacherous foundation stands the unweildy pompous fabrick of Popery: which, being no other than the artificial corruption of Christianity in various shapes, as professed by the church of Rome, since it can have no countenance or support from holy *scripture*, must wholly depend upon *human policy*: Oral traditions must be called in to its aid; and withal it is expedient that their importance and authority should be highly magnified, and put on the level with the holy scriptures. Yea, moreover it is expedient, that the doctors of the church should make this the principal object of their study, and defend this fortress with all the artillery of their wit and power, as being the main support of their cause, and necessary to maintain the established scheme of their ecclesiastical polity.

From what hath been said, I think it appears that the Romanists do exactly agree with the Pharisees, as in many other respects, so especially in this general and fundamental point: viz. holding the tradition of the *elders*: and that, with a view to the same ends of secular policy

policy—and with the same mischievous effect upon true religion: *making thereby the commandments of God of none effect*. And therefore, according to rules of analogy, we justly apply to them the censure so frequently and emphatically denounced by Christ against the Pharisees; the censure of *hypocrisy*, and falsehood in doctrine, and of superstition in worship: *in vain do they worship God who teach for doctrines the commandments of men*.

If now the Romanists should retort upon us this question, viz. does the church of England absolutely reject *all* traditions? we answer, that we do absolutely reject *all such* traditions as are imposed by the church of Rome; such as stand upon uncertain precarious grounds, and interfere with some prior obligation. For we admit only the word of God, as a *rule* of faith: and, in all instances of duty, we *obey God rather than men*. And, according to St. Paul's exhortation, we do hold the *traditions, which we have been taught, whether by word, or by epistle*: that is, gospel doctrines, howsoever delivered to us whether by writing, or word of mouth. Now, since Paul is here speaking of the gospel doctrines, which he had been teaching the Thessalonians, how impertinent, as well as fallacious, is the application which the Romanists make of this text, in favour of the traditions in their church? Here is indeed mention made of traditions—and they

at once run away with the sound of the word: but the thing intended by St. Paul will by no means serve their purpose. For these Romish traditions are not the word of God itself, or what is contained in the holy scriptures; but something *extrinsecal*, and supposed to be distinct; this is what they adopt, and put upon a foot of equal authority with the written word of God. To speak full to the point: we do readily admit whatsoever stands upon the foundation of divine authority: we dispute with them not about the *word*, but the *thing*; 'tis not the *manner* of conveyance, but the *certainty* of the delivery which is the point in debate.—But after all, do the Romanists alledge any *divine* authority in support of their traditions? nothing indeed of this kind is produced; but we must take it for granted: the boldness of the assertion must pass for the proof; and for our satisfaction we are referred to an evidence, which allows no gain-saying, or contradiction, to the authority of their *church*: that is, we are referred to hear-say evidence of fallible fallacious men, who are witnesses and judges in their own cause.

Besides *oral* tradition, as such, is too vague and indeterminate a thing to be admitted as a *rule* in any case. But these Popish traditions are not only *unscriptural*, but often also *anti-scriptural*, carrying in them such internal evidence, as discovers marks of a *forgery*, and thereby destroys its supposed authenticity. We therefore with reason do reject such Popish traditions

ditions as cunningly devised fables, imposed on the ignorant people, and broken reeds which betrays the weakness of a cause which stands in need of such a treacherous support.

Nevertheless let it not be thought that we disclaim *all* regard to church authority: we readily pay a due deference to *Catholick* tradition, properly such: We allow due weight to the concurrent consent and judgment of the Christian church, as witnesses of facts and assertors of doctrines. But we cannot admit tradition as an immediate *rule* of faith and manners; for tradition in itself hath not the nature of a *rule*, but is rather a subordinate and supplemental aid, applied for the better understanding and explaining some prior rule, already established. Thus in the case of church-government by bishops. — In the case of *infant-baptism*, where the words of scripture are general and indeterminate, we are naturally led to enquire in what sense they were understood, and practically applied by the primitive christians, to whom they were originally delivered. And here, since we find their concurrent judgment and universal practice in favour of these institutions, we do readily admit them as agreeable to the will of God. And further, with regard to the commandments of men in things lawful and indifferent, we pay obedience to them in virtue of our obedience to a divine command: but we do not teach them as doctrines of *God*: we do not impose them as points of necessary belief or practice; for they
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are indeed of a mutable nature, and perhaps of temporary expediency ; we do not make that necessary to salvation which God hath not required, nor on the other hand do we presume to dispense with the obligation to a divine law : *We have not so learned Christ.*

The occasion of the present solemnity would indeed lead me on further into enquiries of another kind : would lead me to consider the parallel in a *political*, as well as *religious* capacity : but, as the *Evangelists* are silent on this head, we must borrow what light can be had from some *other* quarter. Accordingly, by way of supplement to the gospel history in this point, we take in the account given of them by *Josephus*, who himself was a Pharisee, and lived near the time of our Saviour.

From him we learn in general, that the Pharisees had so great influence over the people, as to lead them into any persuasion ; and to gain credit to every assertion, however injurious to the character of their civil or ecclesiastical governor : *τοσαυτην δε εχουσι την ισχυν παρα τῷ πληθει, ὡς και κατα βασιλεως και κατα τῆς αρχιερεως τι λεγοντας ευθως πιστευεσθαι.* It hath been already observed in the course of their history, that, soon after their first appearance as a sect, they were for many years much favoured and encouraged by Hyrcanus ; but that afterwards, when he withdrew his favour from them, they became factious and seditious in the state, and gave a great disturbance to his government :

vernment: *μαλιστα δε οι Φαρισαιοι κακως προς αυτον ειχον.*

Alexander, son and successor of Hyrcanus, provoked by their disaffection and turbulency, endeavoured to restrain them by discouragements in all shapes, and proceeded to the infliction of most severe punishments. But all this was attempted in vain: their popularity was grown now too powerful for any restraint. So that in the end, that prince, wearied out in the long contention, did on his death-bed give in charge to his wife Alexandra, to take the Pharisees into favour, as the only means of peace and security to her government. *ταυτας γαρ, επαινευσας αυτην αντι της τιμης, ευνην καλᾳσητειν αυτη το εθνος· δυνασθαι δε πολυ παρα τοις Ιουδαιοις ταυτας εφασκε, βλαιψαι τε μισουνης, και φιλους διακειμενους ωφελησαι· μαλιστα γαρ πιστευεσθαι παρα τῃ πληθει περι ων αν φθονουνης τι χαλεπον λεγωσιν· αυτον τε προσκρυσσαι τῃ εθνει δια τουτας ελεγε, υβρισθειας υπ' αυτου. [Antiq. l. xiii. c. 15.]*

We here bring again into view several circumstances already mentioned, in order to form a better notion of their *political* character: and accordingly we proceed to observe, that, during her reign for about nine years, they had the power both of church and state in their hands; and in the exercise of this they continually grew more insolent and wanton; and now began to gratify their revenge on their adversaries by a retaliation of former injuries.

ηρεμει

ηρεμει δε ἡ χώρα πᾶσα παρεξ τῶν Φαρισαίων· αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἐπεταράττον τὴν βασιλισσάν, πειθόντες ὡς κλεινοὶ τοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρῳ παραινέσαντας ἀνελεῖν τοὺς οὐλοσκοπίους· εἰτα αὐτοὶ σφάττουσι Διογενὴν καὶ μετ' αὐτὸν ἄλλους ἐπ' ἄλλοις [ibid. c. 16.]

In the reign of *Herod the great*, they are still represented under the same character, as an intriguing, seditious, and powerful party, both able and forward to act in opposition to the government, and on occasion to break out suddenly into rebellion, and every kind of violence. Βασιλεῦσι δυναμένοι μαλιστα ἀνίπρασσειν, προμηθεῖς, καὶ τοῦ προύπλου εἰς τὸ πολεμεῖν τε καὶ ἐλαττεῖν ἐπηρεμένοι. Yet they managed their affairs with so much art, and had so good an address, as to keep up a strong interest at court: and that chiefly by means of their influence over the ladies of distinction, to whom they paid an officious attendance, and were a sort of father confessors, ὑπηκτοὶ αὐτοῖς ἢ γυναικοκλίς. And indeed, they experienced the effect of their favour on a very remarkable occasion. For, when an oath of allegiance to the *Romans*, and king *Herod* was in general taken by the *Jewish* nation, the *Pharisees* obstinately stood out and refused to take the oath. *Herod*, for their disobedience, condemns them to pay a considerable fine into his exchequer; this was easily done: for the sum was immediately advanced by a court lady. παντὸς γὰρ τῆς Ἰουδαίου ἑξομισσάντος δι' ἑρκῶν ἢ μὴν εὐνοῆσαι Καίσαρι καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦς πράγμασιν, οἷδε οἱ ἄνδρες οὐκ ὤμωσαν, ὅτις ὑπερ

ὑπὲρ ἑξακισχίλιοι καὶ αὐτοὺς βασιλεὺς ζήμιωσαντες χρημασιν, ἡ Φερώρου γυνὴ τὴν ζήμιαν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰσφέρει.

They appear all along to be a dissatisfied restless people: they were continually carrying on some cabals and intrigues. *Herod*, discovering their plotting, was at length so much provoked, that he proceeded against them with the utmost severity, and cut off the heads of the faction. Καὶ ταῦτε δὴ εξαγγελτα βασιλεὺς ἦν, καὶ ὅτι τῶν περὶ τὴν αὐλὴν διαφθειροῖεν τινὰς· καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν τε Φαρισαίων τοὺς αἰγιαλοὺς αἰναιρεῖ.

Upon the general view of their character, they were ever an unquiet and troublesome sect, seditious and disaffected to all administrations of which they had not the direction, being ever as forward to raise disturbances in the state, as to make innovations in the scheme of religion.

Now, who, that reads this history, would not be prompted by the obvious similitude of circumstances to direct the application to the Pharisees of the church of *Rome*? and more especially to *that* religious order whose unchristian behaviour has disgraced and, I had almost said, blasphemed that holy denomination, which they bear, in contradiction to their profession, as servants of that master, *whose kingdom is not of this world*. Compare their principles and practices with those of their Jewish brethren—throughout the whole you will find a wondrous analogy; a like unquiet
and

and intriguing spirit—like arts of gaining popularity among the vulgar, and of forming an interest at court—of getting admiffion into the closet and cabinet—of governing the confciences of kings and courtiers, and directing publick councils. They too are fhrewd politicians, respectable for their abilities, and formidable in the abuse of their influence and power. In prosperity ever affuming and infolent: under difgrace and difcouragements feditious and turbulent, making themfelves confiderable and fignificant, merely for their difpofition and power to do mischief, and diftrefs every adminiftration by which they are not favoured.—Look into every kingdom where their influence hath prevailed: what hath been the vifible effects?—Such as might of courfe be expected from wicked cunning, from infatiate avarice, from cruel ambition, and malignant feditious, whether difappointed or triumphant; tumults, perfecutions, plots, confpiracies, and mafacres.

The hiftory of *France* more efpecially, during the two laft centuries, abounds with notorious examples. Is there found a bigotted queen regent? ſhe is at once befet and governed by their counfels: the *Pharifees* ſoon get poffeffion of their *Alexandra*, and abufe the royal power in procuring their own advancement, and the extirpation of thofe, whom they call Hereticks. Hence the unrighteous perfe-

persecutions of innocent subjects ; hence popular discontents, insurrections, civil wars, murders and acts of inhumanity, authorized and sanctified under the pretence of religion. In vain were edicts published for the expulsion or discouragement : the religious incendiaries grew too powerful to be controuled by laws ; yea, their princes have been often awed into a compliance with demands, which never could be satisfied ; and taught by many extraordinary instances to dread the effects of their implacable resentment. Witness the untimely end of the two *Henries*, openly assassinated by enthusiastick zealots : a bloody sacrifice to the revenge of an ungrateful discontented party. Need I mention the recent example in the kingdom of *Portugal*, of crimes and punishments shocking to an English ear, and not to be reflected upon without horror !

With regard to this nation, it was our happiness to have been made sensible of our danger, without suffering the mischief. We are this day assembled to commemorate our deliverance : and this anniversary commemoration, as it reminds us of the great danger escaped, should withal excite in our hearts proportionate degrees of gratitude to our deliverer, and perpetuate the detestation of those principles, which could lead men into such a horrid and unnatural conspiracy.

I might enlarge upon many useful reflexions arising from this subject ; but, now I shall briefly

briefly close the whole with a practical inference from the doctrine contained in my text, on the caution, which on this occasion our Saviour gave to his disciples; *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*: beware of those corrupt doctrines, whose contagious quality will affect the whole system of morality and religion.

But lastly, with regard to ourselves—since we glory in the notion of our reformed church, it behoves us to apply to ourselves the moral lesson suggested by that character; viz. the obligation to a greater purity of doctrine, and holiness of life. Without this we disgrace our holy profession, and are really involved in the same censure, which we apply to our adversaries: according to the declaration made by our Saviour to his disciples: *except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven.*

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